



Meeting Notes

Public Engagement Meeting #2

September 3, 2014, 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Town Hall, Horton Road, Blooming Grove, NY

Attendance:

Town of Blooming Grove Steering Committee:

Richard Bachman – co-chair
Lorraine Tomassi
Julius Sas
Jay Beaumont
Carl Takiakjian
Carl Gilbert

New York Department of State

William C. Harding
Lisa Melville

New York Rising

Lori DuBord

Town of Blooming Grove

Robert Fromaget, Supervisor
Johanna Kiernan, Town Board
Doug Mitchell, OEM Director

Tetra Tech, Inc.:

Emily Slotnick
Russ Dudley
Becca Eith
Cynthia Bianco
Susan Roth

Public

Chris Ciccotelli
Maryellen Ciccotelli
Mike Brockway
David Torres
Barbara Fitzgerald
James Wilson
Jeff Topps
Barbara Topps
Tom Graham
Constance Calderin

John Zanat
Deborah Zanat
Valerie Prunty
Avis Sylvester
Kate Almadi
Helen Blaszc
Kevin Hayes
Christine Hayes
Laura Horn
Rick Horn

Jim Kavanah
Barbara Kavenah
Helen Tudisco
Robert Burrebrach
Carrie Smith
Ron Jurain
Melinda Munro
Peter Dowling
Jeanne Dowling

Agenda Item: Welcome and Introduction

Presenter: NYSDOS/NY Rising

Summary of Discussion:

1. W. C. Harding welcomed everyone to the meeting, and introduced L. DuBord and L. Melville to the audience. He also gave a brief description of the NY Rising Program and indicated that the purpose of the meeting is to get feedback on the work that has been completed since the start of the program. Intent of the program is to help communities build back better and be more resilient when the next flooding event happens in the community.
2. The program was created by Governor Cuomo in response to storms Irene, Lee and Sandy, and the funding for the program is from the federal program known as the Community Development Block Grant – Critical Recovery (CBDG-CR). There are two phases of the program. The Town of Blooming Grove is in the planning phase. After this phase is over, the project implementation phase begins and the community will have up to 3 million dollars to implement project that are chosen through this planning phase. Awards were based partly on the amount of damage received and recorded through FEMA after the storms.

3. The Village of Washingtonville participated in the NY Rising program last year and is now in the implementation phase.
4. The Committee Co-chairs were introduced to the public, as well as the consultant team. Lori Dubord gave additional remarks about the program and the importance of community involvement, stating that the committee co-chairs were volunteers that provided valuable input to the consultant team, and that this is a community-led process. The outcomes of the plan will reflect community preferences as conveyed by the planning committee.
5. The Rising to the Top program is a special award for those communities that have outstanding plans that address the following areas: Regional (additional potential award of 1.5 million); Vulnerable populations (additional potential award of 1 million); and Green Infrastructure (additional potential award of 1 million). The State will be helping the community put Blooming Grove's projects in the best possible position for this special award. This award would be in addition to the 3 million allocated to the community of Blooming Grove.

Decision/Motions/Votes: N.A.

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 Action Items: N.A.

Person Responsible:

Due Date:

Agenda Item: Overview/Presentations

Presenter:

Tetra Tech/Slotnick and Dudley

Summary of Discussion:

1. Emily Slotnick was introduced as the community planner lead. She provided a brief explanation on how projects were developed and the need to link the project to the flooding disaster, with the idea of creating resiliency in the community from flooding events. Recovery is focused on 6 major topic areas: Infrastructure, Housing, Economic Development, Health and Social Services, Natural and Cultural Resources, and Community and Capacity Building. In all categories it is important to consider the effect on vulnerable populations (elderly, poor, and children).
2. The committee meets every two weeks and the public is welcome to attend. A meeting schedule is available on the NY Rising website and at the Town of Blooming Grove.
3. Section 1 of the plan is complete; it contains the vision statement, goals and objectives of the committee, and a characterization of the events that caused the flooding damage in Blooming Grove, which was mostly due to Irene. Feedback from Public Engagement Meeting #1 was incorporated into this section and more effectively "tells the story" of the flooding that occurred in Blooming Grove and helped to shape all sections of the plan. The final draft of the information was summarized on posters displayed at the meeting.
4. Section 2 builds on Section 1 and is in the process of being finalized. Section 2 applies science to the flooding areas, in order to better understand what happened, and lists the needs and opportunities developed from previously gathered information. Two main tools that are in the final stages of development for this section are:

- the Risk Assessment, which helps the committee understand the risk of flooding of a critical asset that would be important to the recovery after flooding.
 - The Hydraulic HEC-RAS study, which is in the process of being refined by the engineering team. The HEC-RAS study helps the committee to better understand the impacts of flooding within the riverine waterways in Blooming Grove.
5. The needs and opportunities are in final draft, as well as the Risk Analysis. These sections are summarized in handouts and on posters displayed at the meeting. The public was encouraged to provide feedback on these items at this meeting.
 6. The public will have an opportunity to comment further on the plan as it progresses. There are a total of 4 public engagement meetings, and two more are yet to be scheduled. It is important that the public reach out to their networks to invite more residents to future meetings.
 7. General timeline of the project as of this date:
 - June: committee was formed, a tour of the town was undertaken and a geographic study area was determined. In addition, the vision statement was developed.
 - July: Critical Assets were defined and critical assets were refined and developed. The first public engagement meeting was also held at the end of July.
 - August: Section 1 was completed and reviewed; the Committee met with first responders, and finalized needs and opportunities. By this time the committee had a sense of where damage was and what happened during Irene. The Risk Assessment followed the development of the Critical Asset list. The purpose of the Risk Assessment is to rate the risk of flooding of up to a 500 year storm.
 8. The committee and the consultant team acknowledged that there are a number of issues relating to the Stormwater runoff, and the engineering team is in the process of future evaluation of those areas while they finalize the Hydraulic (HEC-RAS) study for the plan.
 9. The next major task of the committee will be to develop the resiliency strategies, which will lead to the development of projects. These projects will be evaluated with the help of state representatives for the feasibility of funding under this program.
 10. The goal of the planning program is to develop projects over and above the funding capability of the NY Rising Program award amounts, and with the help of the State representatives, other potential funding sources will be identified.

Decision/Motions/Votes: N.A.

Action Items:	Person Responsible	Due Date
Amend Risk Assessment	Emily Slotnick	A.S.A.P.

Agenda Item: HEC-RAS modeling/other comments Presenter: Tetra Tech/Dudley

Summary of Discussion:

1. Russ Dudley was introduced as the Hydraulic Engineering team lead for the Blooming Groves NY Rising Project.
2. The HEC/RAS model used to examine the flooding works best for channel modeling (rivers, streams, and creeks). It was developed by the Army Corps of Engineers, and this NY Rising Project uses previously developed information for modeling flooding on Moodna Creek, Satterly Creek and Perry Creek. Some of the information was developed for the Washingtonville Plan, which gave the team a head start in the data collection process.
3. Section profiles of each of the streams were shown to demonstrate the effects of obstructions in the water channels during different flooding events. Obstructions were defined as manmade objects such as bridges weirs, culverts, etc. R. Dudley explained how to read the information on the profiles and how to spot an obstruction in the flow of the channel. In addition, bridge cross sections demonstrated the effects of the water levels of different flood events, and how to better understand how the bridge would impact the flow of water in the channel. Birdseye views of the 100 hundred year floodplain imposed on aerial maps demonstrated the reach of the flood plain along each creek.
4. The obstructions in the models can also be removed, to better understand how flooding occurs in the natural floodplain. This academic exercise can disprove or confirm the obstructions effect on flooding. For example, if a bridge was too shallow and water was forced to go over or around the bridge and where flooding might occur.
5. The engineering team will be in the field to confirm the HEC-RAS modeling at key flooding points. In addition, storm water runoff issues will also be assessed, considering that there have been significant flooding impacts from sheet flows from Mountain Lodge and other areas.
6. Public Comments:
 - A question was asked about how storms were characterized and what it meant, because it seemed that storms that are classified as 100 year storms are occurring more frequently. It was explained that the classification system is not perfect, because storms are affected with the amount of rain, the time in which it falls and where it falls in the area. The classification system should be thought of as a tool that helps with the ability to model and predict storm events.
 - The worst flood on record likely occurred with Irene. The increase in flooding is also due to development within the town over the last 100 years.
 - There were several questions about building representations on the cross sections shown and how they show when water goes around the bridge.
 - There was a question about the impacts of downstream flooding from speeding up flow or simply removing structures to prevent flooding in Blooming Grove. This possibility would be examined with the HEC-RAS model.
 - The preliminary examinations of the flows without the obstructions revealed that a more effective approach to resolving flooding may be creating flood storage. Several questions about this approach, and regarding the NYRCR Washingtonville proposed projects to create storage were discussed with the audience. The audience agreed with the committee that a regional approach to finding flood storage would be a good idea to pursue.

- Mountain Lodge’s roads were washed out in several places, and water was waist deep on many roads. Large debris (rocks and trees) tumbled down the mountain along the trails. This area is also the home to many low income residents.

7. Decision/Motions/Votes: N.A.

Action Items: N.A.	Person Responsible	Due Date
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Agenda Item: Upcoming Months/Conclusion	Presenter:	Tetra Tech/Slotnick
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Summary of Discussion:

1. Upcoming Months:
 - September: Strategies and Actions will be developed; the engineering team will be in the field. The strategies are due September 19th, and the committee will begin to develop projects.
 - October: the first draft of the plan is due; projects will be in the development stage.
 - November, Draft #2 will be due, and circulated to the committee. Public Engagement Meeting #3 will be held to receive public input on draft.
 - December 5: The final plan will be due.
 - Mid-January: the final plan will be presented to the public at Public Engagement Meeting #4, and the implementation process will begin.
2. The presentation slide show will be available online as a PDF. Links to the NY Rising Website and other sources of information about the project were also provided.
3. The public was invited to look at the displays and comment on the draft Needs and Opportunities, risk assessment, converse with the planning team, and submit answers to a questionnaire provided at the meeting.
4. Decision/Motions/Votes: N.A.

Action Items: N.A.	Person Responsible	Due Date
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